



Office of Multicultural Student Affairs Newsletter

My Experience on Asian Awareness

Victoria P. Coleman

Inside this issue:

- Fun facts about April** **2**
- Graduates preparing for may graduation.** **2**
- Interview with OMSA Peer Advisor, Kong Lee** **3**
- Interview with UWP Grad student, Marion Rocha, Jr.** **3**
- Congratulations from OMSA** **4**

In the month of April, we celebrate Asian Awareness Month here at UW-Parkside even though in 1990, President George H.W. Bush proclaimed the entire month of May to be Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.

The Asian community comes from a very exceptional circle. With all the stereotypes thrown their way, society thinks that they know all there is to the Asian community.

I really have not had any personal experiences with the Asian community until I met my sorority sister Thavone, who is Laotian. As an African American, I know and have experienced things in my culture. However, my eyes were completely open to a new cultural experience when I was invited to my Thavone's family gathering.

Feeling out of place, I was quickly taken in by her mother when she handed me a plate and told me to make myself at home and eat. I saw all of the traditional Asian food that I personally loved, egg rolls, rice and lo-mien.

Another cultural shock came when I went into Thavone's cousin's house to meet some more of her family. Inside of the house, there was a ceremony going on in the living room. Thavone informed me that they were paying respect to the people who passed away and that everyone had to be silent. I was afraid to go inside of the house because I didn't know if I could come in, being that I was not Asian.

Thavone gave me the okay and I smiled and walked into the kitchen where I was once again educated to a new culture experience. I saw women sitting on the floor in a circle cutting and chopping meat on a big chopping board. Thavone informed me that in the Asian household, the women prepare the meals and work together as a group to make the food.

I felt like I had to help because there was so much food and as a guest in their house, it would only be respectful. When we went back outside one of Thavone's cousins made me feel more comfortable by talking and joking with me. He

made fun of Thavone and I for being in a Sorority and later in the conversation it was brought up that he was a Buddhist and that in his culture he believed that it was the year 2050. I didn't believe him at first but Thavone told me that it was true. According to Buddhists there is no God, but they reverence the Buddha and his teachings as though he were one. Buddha, believe in no Atman's, nor is there a Brahman or supreme being because all is not permanent. They believe that to have faith in a higher power is nothing more than illusion.

Overall, this experience has taught me a lot about the Asian community. Before, I never knew anyone personally that was Asian, so automatically like society I grouped them in all one category. With Thavone's family warm welcome, I was introduced to a culture that I will always stand up for if someone misinterprets their place here in society.

Events for Asian Awareness Month

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OMSA and PAO are putting on a lot of fun events this Month here at UW-Parkside that everyone should come out and support.

On April 5, 2006, there will be an Asian Aware-

ness Month Kick-Off at Noon in Main place.

April 19, 2006, PAO will have a Read-In at noon in Main Place

And lastly, on April 26, 2006 OMSA will have an-

other Speak Out, "What is Yellow?: The Social & Political Definition of Asian Americans" at noon in Union Square.



Fun Facts about April

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"April showers bring May flowers" is a phrase that everyone says in the month of April. Spring is here, the weather is changing and people are readjusting to the time change.

April is such a peaceful and fun month, especially for little kids. One day in particular kids look forward to happens the first of the month, April Fools Day. No one knows how the prank began, but some historians believe it started in France. They had a New Year's festival that was celebrated from March 25 to April 1, and they would then exchange gifts. But, later, King James IV changed the holiday to January 1 for New Years. The people that still celebrated it April 1 were called 'April fish' and sent mock presents.

Another day that kids look forward to is Easter. Waking up to a basket full of toys and candy, decorating and hunting for eggs, and seeing the Easter bunny are just the highlights.

But as we get older we know the real reason why we celebrate Easter. Easter celebrates the resurrection of Jesus Christ, thus making it the most important Christian festival of the year. On the third day, Christ's tomb was empty, he arose, and people talked with him. Christians believe his resurrection means that they too will some day receive a new life after death.

Some more fun facts that happen in the month of April are Arbor Day and Palm Sunday. Arbor Day began in Nebraska and is set aside for

planting trees and is mostly celebrated by school children. Most states celebrate the holiday as does most provinces in Canada. Southern States and Hawaii celebrate it somewhere between December and March, while most Northern states celebrate it in April or May.

Lastly, Palm Sunday is the beginning of Holy Week on the Christian calendar, and is the Sunday before Easter. People spread palms and clothing in front of Jesus as he entered Jerusalem, several days before his crucifixion.

April is very humble month and should be set a side for families to come together and reflect on how blessed they are and to celebrate all these fun facts that occur in the month of April.

UWP students preparing for May Graduation

Victoria P. Coleman

As a senior graduating this May, I personally know how it feels to finally know that in just a couple of months, I will be walking across the stage and receiving a bachelors degree. The intense moment of knowing that once that degree is in my hand, the "real world" is out their waiting for me.

For myself, I am still deciding what direction I want to go career wise. Having my intern for OMSA has opened my eyes to new skills that I developed, from creating the look of the newsletter to interviewing students and faculty. I'm hoping that by May 14th, that I will know what direction I will be heading.

I know that I am not the only graduating senior feeling this much intensity, I wanted to ask UWP seniors

who on the flip side has decided what they are doing after graduation. There were three students who automatically came to mind when I thought of doing this article, here are comments from the three.

"On August 1, 2006 I will be moving to Washington D.C. to attend the George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services. I will be pursuing my master's of Public Health degree in Community Oriented Primary Care with a certificate in Public Policy, and Maternal and Child Health. My dreams are to one day be able to establish non-profit clinics and help to develop programs that will offer quality health and preventative care to underprivileged and under represented populations.

-Nina Brown

"I am finishing up all my classes and preparing for family and friends to watch me graduate on May 14th. I've spent the last couple months interviewing with schools for Graduate Assistantships and stressing on whether or not I would get one. I received an offer and accepted at Southern Illinois University Carbondale and will receive my Masters in Higher Education Administration, College Student Personnel program.

-T.J.

-Katrina Edwards

"As of right now, I am wrapping up classes making sure that I am passing everything. In September I will be moving to Texas and will be attending grad school in North Texas to get me Masters in Journalism."

OMSA Peer Advisor Getting Involved

Olivia Lopez

Olivia: Where did you hear about the Multi-Cultural Professional Day event that you just attended?

Kong: I was actually approached by Mary Xiong, here in OMSA. She informed me about the event and advised me to attend. There were a large amount of students who attend this event, but I never attended. I decided that this would be the year that I would get the full experience of Multicultural Professional Day.

Olivia: What is the purpose of the event?

Kong: I feel that the event was to teach us how to be professionals in the real world. They taught us everything from; how to eat with proper table manners, to creating resumes, interviews, and how to prepare myself for the real world and also prep for grad-school test.

Olivia: Prior to this event, have you attended any other beneficial workshops or events?

Kong: Yes I have, I attended

the Hmong National Development (HND) Conference with the Parkside Asian Organization in Minneapolis, MN. HND was a conference that is held every year basically for Hmong students. It is a great conference because they talk about issues dealing with Hmong communities such as the Hmong people struggling to survive in the Jungles of Laos. It is very educational and heart-breaking as well. But it is good to inform ourselves that issues like these do exist.

Another event I attended was the "free clinic." This was also a good event because a Church in Milwaukee had offered free medical screenings, dental screenings, vision screenings, hair cuts, hot meals, groceries, spiritual counseling and entertainment in a Kenosha school district. I attended this event with some PAO (Parkside Asian Organization) and BSU (Black Student Union) members. It was nice seeing so many volunteers helping out. This is what I am talking about, helping out, volunteering and

meeting new people to grow and to network. So both of these events were great!!!

Olivia: Well Kong I thank you for this interview and valuable information in which you have enlightened me with, is there any last advise that you would like to leave with?

Kong: Everyone on campus should attend these events when they first come to Parkside. The Multicultural Professional Day's event was not available for freshmen, yet they are encouraged to volunteer. These workshops truly gave me valuable information and I would encourage every student to attend as many events that they possibly can. My last advice for new freshmen's; first thing is to join a club, get involve on campus and volunteer as much as possible. Need help for volunteer opportunities, go to the Career Center and ask for Casey.

Olivia: Thank you again.

Kong: You welcome, anytime.

"This is what I am talking about, helping out, volunteering and meeting new people to grow and to network."



Peer Advisor Kong Lee

The Benefits of Internships: Interview with Marin Rocha Jr.

Olivia Lopez

Olivia: When you first came to UW Parkside, did you know that you wanted to pursue your Masters after Bachelors?

JR: No, when I first came to Parkside I wanted to be a Computer Engineer. But then I started to contemplate about what I cared about and incorporated that into what I wanted to study.

Olivia: What made you decide to come back to pursue your Masters?

JR: I wanted to do this because I needed to fulfill the things that I cared about. If I were a lawyer than I could help people. I could offer legal advice and so forth. Being a lawyer carries this

stature where people actually want to listen to you and with that type of power and influence you could actually help people.

Olivia: Ok. Did you have any internships here at UW Parkside?

JR: I interned at one of the biggest personal injury law firms in Wisconsin. They have done half of the personal injury trials in Wisconsin. I interned at the Kenosha branch. I got the internship by simply proving myself to my professors. When the time came for me to start an internship, they pieced me with a former alumni who was one of their

former students.

Olivia: What advice would you give a student that would like an internship.

JR: It is a great way to get your feet wet in the real world before completely stepping out. It is one of the only ways that you can give evidence to a future employer that you have already acquired specific work experience through your internship. An internship can help determine whether you truly want to go down that particular path.

Olivia: Well thank you for your information and for sharing your experiences.

JR: Anytime!



Daisy's are the flowers in the month of April.



The diamond is the birthstone in April.



I've spent the last couple months interviewing with schools for Graduate Assistantships and stressing on whether or not I would get one.

TRYING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

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We're on the Web!

[Http://www.uwp.edu/Departments/
Multiculturalaffairs](http://www.uwp.edu/Departments/Multiculturalaffairs)

OMSA Mission Statement:

The Office of Multicultural Student Affairs promotes a diverse inclusive campus environment and serves as a resource to the campus community as well as the surrounding community, while offering academic and cultural programs. It is our goal to enhance the college experience, so all students achieve academically and compete in a global society.

Congratulations from OMSA



Caption describing picture or graphic.

Congratulations Class of 2006!!! As you begin your journey through your professional experience, OMSA encourages you to continue to **connect** yourself and others to opportunities to enhance your quality of life; to constantly develop yourself as a professional and member of society by pulling someone else forward, remembering if it were not for the pioneers before you, this opportunity could have just been a dream. **Empower** yourself and those around you to take on the challenges and contribute to their respective communities. **Develop** yourself as a professional and a member of the general public. Remember you are **successful** in completing your goal of an undergraduate degree and understand that your education is the fruit of your labor and no one can take that away from you. In addition, OMSA offer sincere THANKS for your countless contributions to the culture and climate of the University of Wisconsin Parkside's campus community while pursuing your degree. Again, OMSA congratulates you on your accomplishments and looks forward to working with you in the future as a UW-PARKSIDE Alum.

Sincerely,
Damian Evans